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240 State and Local Politics

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Xavier University – Summer 2013  
POLI 240 - State and Local Politics  
Dr. Mack Mariani

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**  
This course will provide students with an introduction to major political institutions and processes in state and local government in the state of Ohio. Students will learn about these institutions through firsthand interaction with political actors and firsthand observation of political institutions and processes. The course will focus in particular on the legislative and budgetary process, executive administration, judicial decision-making, the role of political parties and interest groups.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**  
You can contact Mack Mariani at any time of the day or night by cell phone at 513-508-6849 or by e-mail at marianim@xavier.edu. Office hours are by appointment on the day of our class meetings or via Skype or Google Hangout.

**RESOURCES**  
There are no required books for this course, but all students will be using information from the following websites quite frequently during this course:  
Ohio Legislative Service Commission  
Guidebook for Ohio Legislators

**GRADING**  
Grades will be based on your overall performance in course assignments and your successful completion of all course requirements.  
25%  Writing Assignments  
25%  Research Project  
25%  Final Exam  
25%  Participation

**Writing Assignments**  
Each week, students will be assigned a brief, 1-2 page writing assignment that relates to that week's speakers and field observation exercises.

**Research Project**  
Students should work with their individual offices and the instructor to choose a major research project to be completed over the course of the 8-week session. The project could involve writing a report, a legislative briefing paper or policy paper, or creation of a database that will be of practical use for your office. The instructor will assign you a project if your office does not have any research needs.
TENTATIVE READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Week 1: Course Introduction
- No Readings. Review the Syllabus

Week 2: The Legislative Branch
- A Guide to Legislative History in Ohio
- Guidebook for Ohio Legislators, Chapters 2 & 5
- Legislative Service Commission - Legal Foundations of the Budget
- Guidebook for Ohio Legislators, Chapter 8

Week 3: The Executive Branch
- Guidebook for Ohio Legislators, Chapters 7 and 11

Week 4: The Media
- Guidebook for Ohio Legislators, Chapter 10

Week 5: The Judiciary
- Members Only Brief: Some Suggestions on how to Approach the Ohio Constitution
- Guidebook for Ohio Legislators, Chapter 12

Week 6: Interest Groups
- Legislative Fellowship Program - skim application site.

Week 7: Parties and Elections
- Adopting General Assembly and Congressional Districts
- An Overview of Ohio's Election Process
- Guidebook for Ohio Legislators, Chapters 3 & 10

Week 8: Review and Final Exam
- No readings this week.